

**Testimony of Theresa Velendzas Before the Connecticut General Assembly of
Committee on Children
March 6, 2014**

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban co-Vice Chairs, Ranking Members, and honorable members of the Committee on Children. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting SB 46 and Act Concerning Pesticides on School Grounds.

I am unfortunately unable to attend this important hearing in person but want to applaud your efforts to protect our children once again. My son and daughter came to testify last year on GMO labeling and STILL talk about it! Thanks to all of you for the work that you do and thanks for this wonderful teaching opportunity for them.

As a mother of two young children, how grateful I am that people like yourselves have taken the time to ensure that elementary schools are protected! It seems surprising that we have to go through this process to expand those same protections to older children, people who still see a pediatrician for their medical needs people who spend a lot of time at school and after school events playing soccer and sitting on the grounds of their school.

Schools are supposed to be a safe place for parents to send their children. Chemical trespass is not an acceptable means to cut costs or cut corners. Chemical trespass neither protects students nor creates better school fields. Chemical trespass IS the threat and it affects our most precious investment into our future. Spraying pesticides in schools exposes children to toxic chemicals that we know can have harmful effects on their health.

Despite what some may consider a debate, the science is there to demonstrate the especially harmful effects of exposure to toxic chemicals in developing children. The precedence is there for elementary schools based on that same science that tells us Roundup can cause respiratory problems and irritate skin, is associated with hyperactivity, and that chronic exposure can lead to higher rates of birth defects. We know that there is an association between Roundup and other organophosphates leading to cancers and even death. Your vote will ensure the use of cleaner alternatives. Please vote yes for this amendment and know that you are supported.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can assist in this effort in any way.

Respectfully,
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